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Challenge Seeks New Models for Arts Journalism

Knight Foundation and NEA offer up to \$100,000 for projects

San Jose among eight cities to participate in Challenge

SAN JOSE, CA (July 8, 2011) Knight Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) today are launching an eight-city competition seeking new models for local arts journalism in the digital age. The initiative seeks to rethink how traditional media systems function, harnessing the latest tools and technology to make the transition to the new information environment. San Jose/Silicon Valley is among the eight communities able to participate in the Challenge.

Just as cultural institutions are pursuing new ways to engage audiences, information portals are also seeking innovative methods to cover, inspire and engage communities through the arts and to provide platforms for high quality cultural criticism and coverage.

“With the changing media landscape, we have a real opportunity here to find new, engaging and sustainable models,” said Dennis Scholl, vice president/arts for the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The best ideas may well be the ones that stretch our thinking.”

NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman said, “The challenges facing arts journalism are well known. However, no clear solutions have yet emerged to sustain locally relevant coverage. We are counting on the bold and innovative thinking in these eight communities to begin showing a path forward.”

Individuals, non-profits and commercial businesses are eligible to apply. Partnerships between traditional and emerging media organizations are encouraged. There is no limit to the number of applications an organization can submit. Up to \$100,000 is available per project: first round winners will receive up to \$20,000 to create an “action plan” for developing their idea, and will be eligible for up to \$80,000 in the Challenge’s second round to implement it. Although the applicant may

be from outside the immediate community, the proposed project must benefit the San Jose/Silicon Valley community directly.

“This is an important opportunity to exemplify how to channel our community's talent across sectors to sustain insightful journalism and engage audiences. No place is better suited to develop a model for the nation than San Jose,” said Kerry Adams Hapner, director, San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs.

“The San Jose and Silicon Valley region has a uniquely diverse cultural scene that reflects the world famous creativity and innovation of the region. We hope this challenge will help stimulate a greater engagement of our community with the arts here that add so much to our region's vitality,” said Judith Kleinberg, San Jose/Silicon Valley program director for the Knight Foundation.

“No idea is too unusual,” Scholl said. “Embedding a nonprofit reporter in a for-profit news organization? Creating a new collective to share professional work? Asking the community to decide which arts stories are best and put up the money to cover those? Have better ideas that never would have occurred to us on our own? Fill out the application form, and send them in.”

The application and additional information can be found at www.artsjournalism.org

About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age and invests in the vitality of communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects that promote informed and engaged communities and lead to transformational change. For more, visit www.knightfoundation.org.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$4 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector. To join the discussion on how art works, visit the NEA at arts.gov

About the City of San Jose

From its founding in 1777 as California's first city, San Jose has been a leader, driven by its spirit of innovation. Today, San Jose stands as the largest city in Northern California and the Capital of Silicon Valley—the world's leading center of innovation. The city, the 10th largest in the U.S., is committed to remaining a top-ranked place to do business, to work and to live. For more information, visit, www.sanjoseca.gov.

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